

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A method for storing data comprising the step of storing first information with first data at the same addressable storage location in a computer readable medium, wherein the first information directly indicates the status of the first data.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the status indicates a reliability of the first data.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the first information is a data reliability qualifier bit.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the first information is embedded with the first data.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the first information is appended with the first data.

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of storing second information with second data at another addressable location of the computer readable medium, the second information indicating the status of the first data.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the second information is set to indicate that the first data is unreliable.

8. (Currently amended) A method for protecting data comprising the step of storing accompanying first information with first data at the same addressable storage location of a computer readable medium, wherein the first information indicates status of second data associated with the first data.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the status indicates a reliability of the second data.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the first information is a data reliability qualifier.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the first data is parity data.

12. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the first information is set to indicate that the second data is unreliable.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8 further comprising the step of storing second information to the second data at another addressable storage location of the computer readable medium, the second information indicating the status of the second data.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein the second information is set to indicate that the second data is unreliable.

15. (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising:
a computer readable medium having a plurality of storage areas; and
circuitry configured to perform at least one of a group consisting of a reading and a writing of data with respect to the storage areas, wherein at least one of the storage areas includes first information stored with accompanying first data at the same addressable storage location, wherein the first information indicates status of second data associated with the first data.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the circuitry includes a controller that is adapted to store the first information with the first data.

17. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 15 wherein at least another of the storage areas includes second information stored with the second data at another addressable storage location that indicates a status of the second data.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the storage areas are in a RAID configuration.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the first information is appended to the first data.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the first information is embedded in the first data.

21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the first information and the first data are generated by the same function.